New guidelines on funding and monitoring of various Schemes

3302. SHRI S. RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have new guidelines on funding and monitoring various schemes;

(b) whether watershed programmes would be allocated more funds; and

(c) if so, what are the details?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU): (a) No New guidelines on funding and monitoring of various schemes have been issued by the Ministry of Rural Development.

(b) and (c) While the Government recognises the importance of strengthening the watershed development programmes, the allocation of funds would depend upon the availability of financial resources.

Holding of Panchayat Elections

3303. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the States and Union Territories who have not complied with the mandatory provision of the Constitution to hold election to Panchayats at the expiry of the five years;

(b) the States and Union Territories who have approached court for postponement of election;

(c) whether Government propose to issue direction for withholding of funds under Central and Centrally Sponsored Schemes to such States who have not held elections; and

(d) if so, what action Government have taken?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU): (a) Panchayat elections are overdue in the States of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Jharkhand, Gujarat (for Gram Panchayats), Punjab (for Intermediate Panchayats and District Panchayats) and Uttaranchal and in the UTs of Chandigarh (for intermediate Panchayats), NCT Delhi and Pondicherry.

(b) Matters relating to Panchayat elections are pending in various Courts with regard to Bihar, Punjab and the Union Territory of Pondicherry.

(c) As per the guidelines of the Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS), 20% of funds under the Scheme are to be released as an incentive only if the State concerned has put elected and empowered Panchayati Raj Institution in place. As per the guidelines for release of the Eleventh Finance Commission Grants, these funds are also to be released to the States which have elected and empowered Panchayats.

(d) A Conference of Panchayati Raj Ministers of States was held at New Delhi on 11th July, 2001. It was resolved, *inter-alia,* in the Conference that if the Panchayat elections are not held on time, the Planning Commission/ Government of India would issue directions for withholding funds under Central Scheme/Centrally Sponsored Schemes. The Chief Ministers of States and Administrators of Union Territories have been requested to implement the decisions of this Conference within the time-frames agreed upon during the discussions.

Supply of potable water to villages bordering Delhi

3304. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the inhabitants of the villages bordering Delhi, South-West district are increasingly suffering from fluorosis by drinking untreated water due to non-availability of potable water;

(b) if so, what according to the assessment, if any, made by Government is the gravity of the problem; and

(c) what measures have been taken by Government to supply potable water to the affected villages?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT [DR. (SHRIMATI) RITA VERMA]: (a) to (c) Yes Sir, as reported by the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi, fluoride contents have been found in more than acceptable limits in tubewells of 9 villages and as an immediate remedial measure, potable water for drinking purpose is being provided regularly through water tankers.

To solve the problem permanently, two underground reservoirs and booster pumping stations at Ujwa and Daulatpur are proposed to be constructed. Action for land acquisition is being taken by Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi.